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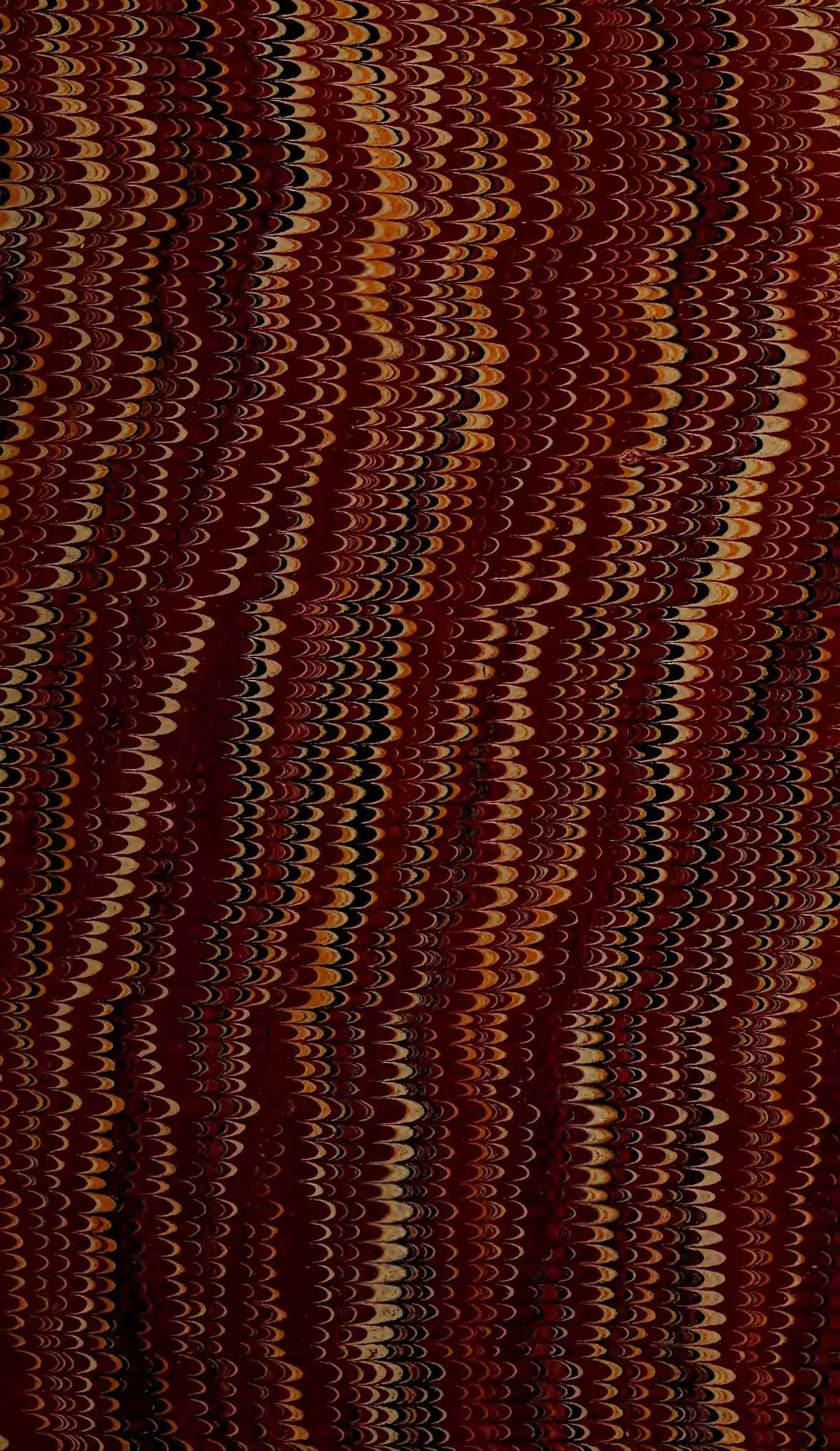
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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



















AN

# ADDRESS,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

NEW-HAMPSHIRE STATE LYCEUM,

IN THE REPRESENTATIVES' HALL,

AT THEIR

SECOND ANNUAL MEETING,

June 5, 1834.

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BY JARVIS GREGG.

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## ADDRESS.

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“KNOWLEDGE IS POWER;” but knowledge is neither wisdom nor virtue. Knowledge is the mere furniture of the understanding; the material indeed, out of which Reason and Conscience build the fair structures of wisdom and virtue; but the material too, out of which the passions often rear the monuments of folly and vice. Intelligence is to be estimated by its use; applied to wise and virtuous ends, it is the greatest of blessings; to pernicious ends, the severest of curses.

Intelligence is, it is true, the vital air of a free government, the pure oxygen, without which neither life nor light can be sustained, which nevertheless, in a pure and unmixed state, is a virulent poison, intoxicating, maddening and destroying all who inhale it. As an engine of political power, a lever to move the world, intelligence has not been overestimated; as the safeguard of liberty, domestic and private happiness and worth, its power has been miscalculated. Statesmen and philanthropists have reasoned on the presumption that men are as much inclined to good as evil; that ignorance is the source and universal intelligence the panacea of every political and moral evil.

“Unshackle the press, multiply the means of knowledge, and pour the stream of science and political information through the opened channels of an intelligent public mind, and the country is safe. Give but the means of information to the



people, and they will approve and maintain the right.”

This is the grand error of modern times. This presumptuous confidence in the goodness of human nature, this idolatry of science as the purifying and preserving salt of the nations, this contemptuous neglect of the only moral antidote of sufficient power to correct the evil tendencies of human character ; these are the ominous features in the philanthropic movements of the present age.

It is not strange indeed that these views should obtain. One extreme usually succeeds another. An age of darkness and despotism has just gone by. The light of knowledge has dawned upon one hemisphere, and it is free. On a large portion of the other the mingled gloom of ignorance and tyranny still rests. From the midst of an enlightened and free population, we look out upon the degraded and enslaved nations of the Eastern Continent. We contrast our own situation with theirs. We stand upon a bright and proud eminence, from which the clouds have rolled away ; a clear sky is above us ; a glorious sun is shining around us.— We are a spectacle to the nations. From the midst of their darkness, the eyes of the oppressed are lifted up towards us in eloquent hope ; while the fiery and malignant glare of the tyrants, who gaze upon the light with terror and rage, tell us but too plainly how they “hate its beams.”

In such a view it would seem to be impossible to mistake the cause of this difference of condition. Wherever there is light, there is seen to be liberty. The intelligence of a people is found to be

ordinarily a pretty exact measure of the freeness of their institutions, and of their public and private prosperity. How natural then would seem to be the conclusion that light, liberty and happiness are correlative and inseparable ideas ; that all that is needed for the healing of the nations is the diffusion of knowledge ; and that free governments, civil and social blessings, public and private integrity and happiness, are the natural and necessary consequence of a diffused and general system of instruction. In all this view there is, as I apprehend, a fundamental error, which I shall attempt to expose.

It is now about twenty years since Mr. Brougham and his Whig coadjutors began to act upon the principles to which I have alluded. They had observed with admiration and delight the political phenomenon of a self-governing people. They had marked the steady progress of the American Republic during a third part of a century, in the full career of honor and prosperity. They saw, as they conceived, in the American system of general instruction, and the universal intelligence of the people, the secret of this successful experiment. They conceived the noble design of regenerating England. The most powerful minds in the country, through the Edinburgh Review and other Whig journals, plead the cause of popular education, with a zeal worthy of themselves and their cause. A series of bills were introduced into Parliament by Mr. Brougham, which, though they were all defeated, or so mutilated in their passage as to lose their principal efficiency, had yet the

effect to direct public attention to the subject of national education, and powerfully, though indirectly, promoted the cause. Failing in Parliament, Mr. Brougham next conceived the plan of bringing to bear on the subject of popular education, the most powerful engine of modern days, voluntary Association. Of the society for the diffusion of Useful Knowledge, its numerous publications and immense influence, as well as of the innumerable Lyceums and other associations, that have grown up under its fostering care, it is not necessary to speak. From being the teachers and models, we in this country have come to be learners and copyists. The societies and publications in England have waked up a spirit of emulation in this country, which for a few years past, more than any thing else, except political discussions, has given tone and character to the public mind among us. Nor has the excitement yet subsided. The impulse is yet strong and vigorous, and the results of the experiment, (for it is still an experiment) are yet to be decisive, in no small degree, on the prosperity of the nation.

It would have been well, if at the very commencement of these movements their authors had enquired whether the principles on which they proceeded were indeed "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth;" whether in a calculation involving the best interests of the world, not for the present generation only, but during all coming time, no error had been admitted in the data, which would vitiate the entire result, and disappoint the high raised hopes of the friends of



liberty and human happiness. It would have been well if Mr. Brougham had weighed well, ere he uttered his famous oracle, "tyrants may well tremble now, for the school master is abroad," whether it do indeed contain the *whole* secret of human freedom and happiness. For, we believe that this view is a partial one ; that an essential element of security and prosperity is overlooked in it ; nay, that all that has been done by these efforts merely, unless other and independent efforts are made to control and modify the result, will be productive only of incalculable mischief. We award cheerfully to Mr. Brougham and his friends the meed of exalted patriotism and liberal philanthropy. Our sympathies are wholly with them, and against their enemies. The party of which they are the representatives, embodies the strength and sinew of the enlightened, high-minded and patriotic in England, the hope and confidence of the world, the phalanx of European liberty. It is with pain therefore that we feel compelled to expose what we believe to be a fundamental and fatal mistake in their most cherished and favorite principles.— But there are higher principles than partiality for individuals, or attachments to a party, and truth and the vital interests of society are paramount to any feelings of delicacy or respect for authority. On the soundness, or unsoundness, the partial or comprehensive nature of the principles that shall obtain on this subject, are staked the hopes of the world for a thousand generations. Let us proceed to examine them in the light of reason, and of the history of our race.

The old Roman cry was, "Give the people tribunes to guard their rights;" give the people knowledge, exclaims Mr. Brougham, and they will guard their rights for themselves. His great principle is, let an enslaved nation be enlightened, and there is no power on earth that can detain it from freedom; let a free people be enlightened, and there is no power on earth that can reduce it to bondage.

That intelligence is an essential condition of freedom is admitted; whether it is the *only* essential condition, is the question.

What is the testimony of history? Passing by the eras of Ethiopic, Egyptian, and Chinese illumination, during which, if the lights of antiquity be not greatly magnified by the mists of obscure and imperfect annals, the human mind burst the shackles of ignorance to exult for a brief moment in its recovered strength, and sink again in bondage and despair, we come to the age of Grecian civilization and refinement. A brighter period in the annals of the human mind does not relieve the dark pages of history. Grecian literature and Grecian art need no eulogist; they admit of none. Their praises are inscribed on the ever-during monuments they have reared. By the unsolicited suffrage of the world, the Grecian models have been installed as the standards of eloquence, poetry and the arts. Nor let it be said that there was here a mere aristocracy of learning and taste; that only a favored few were admitted to the banquet of knowledge, while the many were starving without. True, the people were not instructed

formally and systematically in the schools of science. They were not taught to read ; nor if they had been, could they have been furnished with the means. But they were instructed in a way which was in some respects far better. The populace of Athens constituted one grand adult school. Orators, poets and philosophers were their teachers. The facts of their history, the achievements of their heroes, the glories of their ancestors were all treasured up in their memories in the enduring forms of eloquence and poetry. The poems of Homer and Euripides and Pindar were inscribed on the living tablets of the Grecian mind, if they were not mouldering in material forms on the shelves of the bookstore, or gathering dust in the unfrequented library. A Grecian ignorant ! If he did not know the diameter of Jupiter, or the height of a mountain in the moon, he knew what was far more important for him to know as a citizen and a man, the principles of duty as they were then imperfectly developed ; his mind was stored with the maxims of philosophy and the sentiments of virtue ; his memory was the storehouse of whatever had been wisely said, or felicitously expressed, of the thoughts that breathed from the most exalted patriotism, and the words that burned upon the lips of the sublimest and sweetest bards.

And yet Greece is no more ; Greece, the land of intellect and thought and learning, lives only in the memory of the past. From the very point of her highest elevation, the era of her brightest intellectual developement, we date her decline.—The age of Pericles is at once her highest glory



and her deepest disgrace. From that pinnacle of intellectual glory, dizzy with her very elevation, she fell to rise no more. Science, art, genius, taste, intelligence, could not save her. In the days of her comparative ignorance and barbarism, she was free. Cultivated, refined, intelligent, Greece was enslaved. The fruit of the tree of knowledge was too stimulating. She needed an element of sufficient moral power to control and guide the excited energies of her awakened intellect, and save her from the intoxication of knowledge.

Rome does not furnish an example so much in point. The Roman people were never an intellectual race. Literature, eloquence and taste, were exotics in Rome ; transplanted by a few careful cultivators from a foreign soil ; not the native growth of the national mind. Still there are lights and shades in the successive developements of Roman mind. The age of the republic, the era of liberty, was characterized by little that was cultivated in intellect, or refined in taste. A stern sentiment of patriotism indeed, an absorbing love of country that possessed many of the elements of sublimity, swayed during this period the Roman mind. But they could hardly be said to be at this time an intelligent, intellectual people. The introduction of Grecian models and masters in literature and philosophy near the close of the republic, commenced a new era. Many devoted themselves with ardor to literary pursuits. Native orators and poets and philosophers arose to shed a transient glory around the dying liberties of their

country. The people were partially enlightened. It is not supposable that the people, to whom Cicero and Hortensius and Crassus spoke, and Virgil and Horace sung were less intelligent than their ancestors of a ruder antiquity. It cannot be that an audience, which is said to have risen in tumultuous confusion from their seats in the theatre at the mis-recital of a single verse, was less intelligent and refined than were their fathers, ere eloquence had uttered her voice in the Forum, or poetry attuned her harp in the theatre. The populace of the Augustan age must have been far more intelligent than that of any previous age.—And yet from this point we begin to trace the decline and fall of Rome. If intelligence did not hasten her catastrophe, it did not save her. Rome, like Greece, affords another sad proof that mere intelligence, independently of moral influence, which is an entirely distinct element of social character, is no sure safeguard to liberty, no infallible preservative of the social edifice from decay and ruin.

In the intellectual developements of modern times, other causes besides the mere diffusion of knowledge have essentially modified the result.—Of these we shall speak in the sequel. Modern times however afford two examples exactly in point ; France during the last century, and England at the present time.

The brightest era in the history of French mind commenced with the reign of Louis XVI. A race of philosophers then arose, who for native talent, industry and zeal will not suffer perhaps in com-

parison with the philosophers of any age or country. They were, alas ! fatally or wickedly blind to the true objects and ends of science. But their great ability and zeal cannot but be acknowledged. Unlike all who had preceded them, they directed their efforts not merely to the investigation and advancement of science for its own sake, or that of their particular caste, but to its universal diffusion. They sought to spread the leaven through the whole mass of mind ; to draw off from the grand reservoir innumerable rills, which might water and fertilize the whole face of society. Their conception was magnificent ; their visions glorious.— Human perfectibility, the supremacy of human reason, the uninterrupted and unlimited progress of human Society, were the day-dreams of French philosophy. Their means were wisely selected. A multitude of powerful minds devoted their labors to the preparation of books, treatises, essays and tracts for the people. All France became one great school of philosophy. The stagnant ocean of mind was moved. Its agitation was deep, magnificent and grand. For a while the philosophers rode proudly and gloriously like Tritons amid the waves they had excited. But they had forgotten to provide the only trident of sufficient power to control and allay the storm.— Science may excite and arm with irresistible might the powers of the human intellect ; but science alone cannot restrain and direct them. So found the misguided philosophers of France, when it was too late. When the disciples of the Encyclopædists, cut loose from all the restraints of con-



science and moral obligation, arose in the might of a philosophy, which promised to disenthral the human mind of all political and moral prejudice, and overwhelmed law, order and civilization with the violence of a torrent, the dreaming speculators on human perfectibility found that the spirits they had raised would not down at their bidding. The very weapons they had forged in the laboratories of philosophic seclusion, were turned against themselves. They had put the two-edged sword of knowledge into the hands of maniacs, or rather demoniacs, from whose minds were obliterated every sentiment of virtue, every idea of moral accountability. It was not ignorance that deluged France in an ocean of blood, and stained it with crimes at which humanity shudders. It was not an uninstructed, unreading populace, that perpetrated horrors, which might make the sun in heaven hide his head, and turn the moon to blood. It was the intelligent philosophical disciples of the Encyclopædists. It was *unbaptized science*. It may be said indeed that there was mingled with the pure science of French philosophy, an infusion of positive error ; that the healthful and nutritious banquet of knowledge was marred and poisoned by the intermixture of infidelity and atheism. And why, we may ask in reply, if knowledge be omnipotent to purify and save, why were not these poisonous ingredients neutralized by their more powerful antagonist ? Why were not minds enlightened, expanded, quickened by the truths of pure science, proof against the seductions of error ? Why did not such highly magnetized intel-

lects attract to themselves out of the heterogenous mass presented to them, only the pure ore of truth ? On the principle that mere intelligence is an infallible security against practical and political mistakes, these questions are unanswerable. The true answer, as I shall in the sequel show, is, that the fundamental principle is false ; that the whole higher nature of man, the most important element of character, and the principal ground of the social state, is left entirely out of the account.

But if the French example be deemed irrelevant, let us look at the result of the experiment in England. We have already alluded to the efforts made in England in behalf of popular education, and the motives, which undoubtedly prompted them. I would not be thought for a moment to bring English philanthropy into comparison with French philosophy. In their origin, objects and means, the efforts of the English Whigs differ *toto cœlo* from those of the French Jacobins. And yet the result in either case is nearly the same ; or if it differ, is a difference of degree, rather than of kind, and is owing entirely to the less mercurial temperament of English mind, and other merely adventitious circumstances in their favor. So far as the experiment of the diffusion of mere science, unmixed with any moral ingredient, among the mass of the people, is concerned, English philanthropy has no ground of congratulation or boasting above French perfectionism. The fruit of the tree of knowledge, unmixed with that of the tree of life, has been

found in England too, to be *unto death*. The process of demoralization and disorganization has kept pace with the diffusion of knowledge. Within the last twenty years, during which these philanthropic efforts have been made, crime in England has more than tripled.

The parliamentary return March 29, 1833, shows an increase of criminal committals, which is altogether unprecedented. In 1812 there were 6576—which number by regular increments during twenty successive years, amounted in 1832 to 20,829. In Scotland and Ireland the deterioration in morals has been yet more appalling;—crime in the former country having increased during the same period fourfold, and in the latter country sixfold. “If things continue at this rate, (says a writer in a recent review,) we shall have crime going on not as the *square*, but as the *cube*; in twenty years, the criminals will be 60,000 annually in England; in forty years, 180,000; in sixty years, 540,000; in eighty years 1,620,000; in a century, 4,860,000, or nearly a third part of the whole existing population.”

This is truly an alarming state of things. It indicates, if not positive viciousness, yet a radical defect in the system of public instruction. It proves conclusively, that if the efforts of the Educationists have not been directly accessory to the demoralization of the people, they have not prevented it, and are inadequate to the end for which they were designed. As an experiment on the supposed conservative, purifying influence of pure science, the English plan of popular education, is



an entire failure. It adds but another sad proof to the accumulated examples of history, that knowledge is only an *instrument* of good or of evil ; that independently of a higher and purer influence, instead of furnishing a healthy nutriment to the human mind, it turns to poison and gall ; instead of exciting to useful and praiseworthy enterprise, it adds virulence to the malign passions, and aggravates the “wild rage of the lion,” which mythologic fable makes Prometheus to have placed within the human breast.

“Fertur Prometheus addere principi

Limo coactus particulam undique

Desectam, et insani leonis

Vim stomacho apposuisse nostro.”—*Hor.*

Such is the voice of history. What now is the testimony of reason ?

All sound philosophy recognises a threefold distinction in human nature ; the physical, the intellectual and the moral. These are the body, soul and spirit of the old philosophers, and of the writers of the New Testament.

Education, properly so called, consists in the developement and exercise of these several parts of the man in their due proportions and degrees.—Education is therefore not only entirely distinct from Instruction, [as is evident on a comparison of their etymous, the former being derived from *educō*, to draw out, to develope, and the latter from *instruo*, to furnish, or store with,] but also from a *partial or disproportionate developement* of the human faculties. As there is an important distinction between knowledge and wisdom, learn-

ing and science; as no accumulation of facts can make a wise man, no given amount of intellectual stores a philosopher, so is there an immensely greater and more important distinction between *mental* developement, and *thorough education*.—The former distinction, viz. that between the developement and the mere furnishing of the understanding, is in itself worthy of an ample discussion; especially as there is no distinction, which in this superficial age is more frequently confounded.—Indeed many of the so-called improvements in education, the unending simplifications of simplicity itself, are based entirely on this fatal confusion of ideas. And the consequence, in respect to the minds of the rising generation is, that where one was disheartened by difficulties before, ten are rendered imbecile and nerveless for want of the necessary discipline now; as the ordinary use of empirical nostrums, under pretence of aiding nature in every slight obstruction of her functions, makes ten dyspeptics and valetudinarians for life, where one is saved from a fever. But of this mistake, and the innumerable evils of which it is the prolific source, it is not my purpose now to speak. I shall limit my view to the more important distinction between *mental cultivation* and *thorough education*. Physical developement, which is a constituent part of education, as I have defined it, I leave out of the account; both because there is little skepticism in respect to the maxim '*mens sana in sano corpore*' and because nature neglected or abused here is sure to utter her remonstrances both speedily and in tones that cannot be misunderstood.

Confining my view then to man as an intellectual

and moral being, my position is, that the *spirit* cannot be neglected, or confounded with the understanding in a professed system of education, without the most dangerous and fatal consequences. If man be admitted to possess a spiritual nature, powers that distinguish him from the intelligent brute, and make him the subject of law and moral responsibility, the developement and cultivation of these powers cannot be thought to be matter of indifference. If they exist at all (and who doubts it?) they are the distinguishing prerogative of man, the patent of his humanity, the image of his Maker, wherewith he was stamped and sealed as the "heir of eternity." And can this higher moral nature be safely neglected in a system of education? Can the very attributes of our humanity, and the earnest of our immortality, and our participation of the Divine nature be overlooked without detriment? These questions require no answer.—Reason teaches that all the powers of the mind demand attention and cultivation in proportion to their dignity and worth; and consequently that no system is worthy of the name of education, which neglects or overlooks these spiritual and higher faculties. The merely intellectual man, whose moral nature is dormant or dead, is a monster and not an entire man; he may be among men like a spirit from the world of pure intellect, but he is not *of* them; he has no sympathies with humanity; in his breast no sentiment of virtue inhabits; he has none of the music of tender affections and sensibilities in his soul; he is fit only for "treasons, stratagems and spoils;" let no such man be



trusted. Burke has said, and with a depth of philosophy and felicity of expression, with which almost no other man could have said it, "Nothing can be conceived more hard than the heart of a thorough bred metaphysician. It comes nearer to the cold malignity of a wicked spirit than to the frailty and passion of a man. It is like that of the principle of evil himself, incorporeal, pure, unmixed, dephlegmated, defecated evil." Again he says of another class of purely intellectual men : "The geometricians and the chymists bring, the one from the dry bones of their diagrams and the other from the soot of their furnaces, dispositions, that make them worse than indifferent about those feelings and habitudes which are the supports of the moral world. These philosophers consider men in their experiments no more than they do mice in an air pump, or in a recipient of mephitic gas. They look upon man and whatever belongs to him, with no more regard than they do upon the whiskers of that little, long-tailed animal, that has long been the game of the grave, demure, insidious, spring-nailed, velvet-pawed, green-eyed philosophers, whether going upon two legs or four."

It was from no superficial knowledge of the nature and effects of pure mental development, that Milton has represented the bad spirits in Pandemonium as earnestly engaged in the hair-splitting distinctions of metaphysical discussion. There is a dramatic truth in the representation, which redeems it from the imputation of its being a mere poetic license, or even one of the legitimate franchises of Parnassus. There is no tendency in

purely intellectual cultivation to moral development. The head and the heart are distinct and independent faculties of the man ; each has its appropriate aliment ; each demands its own peculiar culture. The neglect to furnish this food and training to the moral powers, leaves one whole department of the human soul uncultivated and waste, to be overspread with a rank growth of noxious and poisonous weeds.

Enter our penitentiaries and jails : who are their inmates ? The ignorant, the uninformed, the stupid ? Alas ! how often is the reluctant tribute of admiration extorted from the visitor, as he gazes on the intelligent countenances, keen eyes, and imposing presence of these caged tigers ! How often does the suspicion arise in the breast of the admirer of genius, whether virtue be indeed favorable to the developement of the highest energies of intellect ; whether its proud aspirings, its lofty flights, its bold excursions be not repressed by the timid prudence of virtue. Who has not gazed with an admiration amounting almost to idolatry on a Byron perched in proud scorn on the highest pinnacle of the mount of song—on a Napoleon, by the single might of his genius wielding the energies of half a continent ;—though he knew that the former had scattered mildew from his wings and flung perdition all around him, and the latter sacrificed on the altar of his ambition more than a million of his race ?

Why then should it ever have been thought that mere intelligence in the mass of the people would be an infallible guaranty of security and happiness ?

What is there in diffusion, that should change the nature of knowledge ? In the case of individuals, whose moral culture has been neglected, knowledge has quickened the propensity and enlarged the capacity for evil ; has let loose the tiger from his cage, and sharpened his appetite for blood. Why then should the experiment in masses be expected to contradict all our experience in individual cases ? Why should this partial education be expected to do for a nation what it has never done for individuals ? If intelligent, enlightened individuals have been found dangerous to society, why should it be thought that an intelligent community must of necessity be free and happy ? Or is it supposed that liberty and happiness exist only in the fierce conflict of discordant interests and opinions ? that society is held together not by any power of moral cohesion, but by the opposition and balancing of antagonist forces ? that forbearance, moderation, justice, benevolence are empty names, and that only in the clashings of power, the strifes of party-zeal, and the contests of discordant interests, lies the security for individual rights ? I know there is a philosophy which makes fear the only ground of the social union, and resolves all the finer and nobler sentiments of our humanity into the promptings of mere brute instinct, or the suggestions of a grovelling and selfish prudence. The disciples of this school may with consistency believe that mere intelligence in a people, as it makes them Argus-eyed to watch, and arms them with Herculean might to assert and defend their rights, is a sufficient safeguard to liberty and happiness. As



right, duty and conscience find no place in their philosophy, they may well substitute brute force as the measure and the means of individual and public security.

It would be relevant however to inquire of the advocates of this system, what is to limit and direct these antagonist forces, if they become exorbitant; what spirit is to ride upon the whirlwind and direct the storm of popular and party violence. If the people be secured against the oppression of one tyrant or ten, what is to save them from the more formidable jaws of the hydra-headed monster, faction?

It will avail little to a State to cast off the vampires that are gorging themselves on its bosom, if its vitals are to be torn out and rent and trodden under foot by a swinish multitude. But an unprincipled people will not be able to secure themselves against a single despot. Even anarchy has its limits; the tyrant may fall, but tyranny will survive; and from the boiling cauldron of popular fury, in which the antiquated forms of oppression are consumed, there will arise, as from the kettle of Medea, a new form of tyranny in renewed youth and increased vigor. Extremes meet; despotism ever treads upon the heels of licentious faction; and the misrule and anarchy of an unprincipled mob, however intelligent it may be, will ever be followed, as it was in Revolutionary France, by the rise of an iron military domination. On this very principle Mr. Burke was enabled to predict, during the incipient excesses of that revolution, the rise of Napoleon.

If then fear is the only ground of the social state,

and mere power the measure and limit of encroachment on the one hand, and of forbearance on the other, if from the collisions of faction alone may the sparks of freedom and happiness be expected to be struck out, the only prospect before our world is that of the unending cycles of alternate despotism and anarchy. There are probably few among us, who are the avowed advocates of this gloomy system. If however there be any one who hears me, to whom patriotism, justice, benevolence are but other names for interest, policy, and philosophic selfishness, to whom all that is said about duty and conscience is unintelligible jargon, I can only say to him in the language of a Latin motto, inscribed under a beautiful flower,

“Sus, apage, haud tibi spiro.”

Most of my hearers believe in the existence of these higher faculties and principles, and if they have been betrayed into a forgetfulness or neglect of them as elements in the character of the good citizen, it is an error of the head merely. Reverence towards God, love of country, attachment to civil institutions, respect for office and rank, all enter into the idea of a good citizen in the apprehension of my hearers. The sentiments and sympathies of our common humanity are still warm and vigorous in our bosoms. Our hearts have not yet been put into the crucible of a heartless and brutalizing philosophy, till every finer and more ethereal particle has been volatilized and driven off. We *feel*, if the sentiment have never assumed the form of an intelligible proposition, that affection, sympathy, morality, and a controlling and ennobling

fear of God are essential qualities of a good citizen. Our error consists (if with the statesmen and philanthropists of England, we have indeed fallen into it) in presuming that these qualities are the natural and necessary product of mere mental cultivation. Both reason and experience are against this presumption. It is based upon a false philosophy of human nature, and all history shows, that the energies of the human intellect, when excited by the stimulus of knowledge, and uncontrolled by the regulating powers of the moral man, are mighty only to destroy. Like the fabled Phaeton in the chariot of his father Phœbus, they sweep through the world, spreading consternation and ruin all around them. What then, it will be asked shall be done? Shall knowledge be withholden from the people, that they may be kept quiet? Is ignorance the sole condition of security? Must we admit that there is a literal as well as allegorical truth in the soliloquy which our great Poet puts into the mouth of the arch-fiend ;

“Yet let me not forget what I have gained  
 From their own mouths ; all is not theirs it seems ;  
 One fatal tree there stands of knowledge called,  
 Forbidden them to taste ; Knowledge forbidden ?  
 Suspicious, reasonless. Why should their Lord  
 Envy them that ? Can it be sin to know ?  
 Can it be death ? And do they only stand  
 By ignorance ? Is that their happy state,  
 The proof of their obedience and their faith ?  
 O fair foundation laid whereon to build  
 Their ruin ! hence I will excite their minds  
 With more desire to know, and to reject  
 Envious commands, invented with design  
 To keep them low, whom knowledge might exalt  
 Equal with Gods ; aspiring to be such,  
 They taste and die ; what likelier can ensue ?”



If the poet had intended to describe literally the effects of merely intellectual cultivation, he could not have selected apter thoughts or more felicitous expressions. The picture is drawn to the life ; the eyes flash ; the muscles swell ; and the figure “lifts up its head, and addresses itself to motion like as it would speak.” Of knowledge, independently of the developement of our moral instincts, it is literally true, that we “taste and die.”

But there is an ELIXIR OF LIFE, which can save ; a moral ingredient, which mingling with the powerful tonic of knowledge, can prevent the unhealthy, feverish excitement, *which is unto death*, and stimulate to powerful and safe action all the energies of the mind. Let the people be instructed. Let the streams of knowledge be sent abroad in copious irrigations, over the face of society. But let not these streams water only the wild native growth of the fields, or the poisonous plants, which accident or malice has sown. Let the seeds of moral culture be scattered abroad with a liberal hand, and let their plants be trained by the labors and cares of the diligent cultivator. No other means can ensure a rich harvest. Thorns and briars will else inevitably preoccupy the ground.—Reluctate as men may at the doctrine of human depravity, it cannot be denied that while vice shoots forth with a wanton and luxuriant energy, virtue is a plant of slow growth. Diligent effort and assiduous care are requisite in order to bring it to maturity. Let the people then be *instructed* ; but let them be also EDUCATED. Let their intellects be stored with the principles of science, but

let their hearts too be imbued with the sentiments of virtue. Let the powers of their understandings be developed ; but let the faculties of the spirit be also called into exercise.

But how, it may be asked, shall this be done ? What is the appropriate food of the spirit ? What is the best means of that training which the moral powers demand ? To these questions unhesitatingly and boldly I answer, THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST. In the great historical picture of the human mind, two figures stand out in bold relief: Science in the struggle to free herself from superstition, tearing herself rudely away from the embrace of her sister Religion ;—and Religion, disdaining her natural alliance with Science ;—the one mad impiety, the other weak and puling bigotry.

How true a picture is the former emblem of the present state of the public mind ! How very general is the impression, that institutions of learning, literary and scientific associations, journals, reviews &c. should either carefully avoid all connexion with religion, or recognize it only in such barren generalities, as leave it scarcely more subsistence than an empty shade from Erebus, *'vox et præterea nihil.'* In nothing is this unreligious, not to say anti-religious tendency more apparent than in the operations of the societies for the diffusion of useful knowledge and other kindred institutions. How careful have they been to exclude from their publications every thing of a religious character !—Among their millions of books and tracts, what single treatise has the parent society in England put forth, (if we except a brief history of the Church, a mere soul-less skeleton of facts) which even re-



cognizes the christian religion as an element of individual or social character ? It is no apology to say that public opinion demanded such an exclusion. It is the office of reformers to guide and control public opinion. He has but a partial knowledge of human nature, and has read the history of our race to little purpose, who does not recognize in the New-Testament the grand specific for every human ill ;—a moral medicine, which while it quickens the understanding, purifies also the heart ; while it clears the vision to perceive TRUTH and RIGHT, prepares the affections to embrace them. The author and governor of the human mind must be admitted to know best the discipline its powers demand. What madness then to neglect the means of culture, which he has furnished, and attempt to substitute for it expedients of our own. We might as well blot out, if we could, the sun from heaven, and think to bring back the day by encompassing ourselves about with sparks of our own kindling.

In the spirit then of reliance on the wisdom of the Divine mind in giving man the gospel, and I trust, in that too of an enlarged and catholic interpretation of it, which distinguishes between the *letter* and the *spirit*, I avow my settled conviction that the gospel is the only true and safe basis of education. Men cannot be *educated* without it ; their moral powers cannot be fully developed and brought into action independently of it. What may be true of a few philosophic minds in the seclusion of their closets is no safe criterion, by which to judge of the mass of mankind, buffeted and jostled in the crowd and exposed to all the



temptations of actual life. The philosopher in his porch, or in the groves of Academus may perhaps be so rapt in the contemplation of the fair and good, so enamored of the ideal abstractions of virtue, as to rise above the low sensualities of his animal, and the cold speculations of his intellectual existence, into something like spiritual life. But the mass of mankind need something more palpable ; the embodied presence of virtue herself ;— the living forms of religious truth set forth in the person and the preaching of our Saviour. No other influence is capable of grappling, in the case of the multitude, with the allurements of passion. And this is an influence, which is entirely adequate to do it. It has done it in the few cases in which the experiment has been fairly tried.

The Puritans, those pioneers of modern freedom, were deeply imbued with the spirit of christianity. Their religion was indeed in some of its features austere, stern and unlovely. But it was sincere, patriotic and benevolent. The English Revolution of 1640 was as exciting and troublesome a time, as the French Revolution of 1789. The religion of the English patriots saved them from the mad excesses of the French Revolutionists. True, they executed their King ; but with the stern patriotism of Brutus, who slew his best lover for the good of Rome, and not with the insane thirst for royal blood, that characterized the French regicides. If their zeal was not always tempered with knowledge, it was not infuriated with malice. If they contended earnestly, it was for the defence of great principles, not the gratification of malign passions. They sought redress and not revenge ;

and if they trampled coronets and mitres in the dust, it was not as the insignia of office, but as the instruments of tyranny. They loved the King, while they hated the despot. They revered the institutions and ministers of religion, while they disdained all spiritual domination. Their excesses were their calamity and not their crime ; the effervescence of the spirit of liberty working itself clear of its impurities, and not the boiling of the alembic of hell, spreading pestilence and death all around it. They fought for the liberty of constitution and law, not the wild license of anarchy ; and while they loved a regulated, balanced, practical freedom, they shrunk as from the pit of perdition from the dark gulph of insubordination and misrule. And the reason was, the national conscience was developed. The gospel had purified their hearts, while it had enlightened their understandings. The men who had learned to render their rightful allegiance to the King of kings, were ever ready to render to Cæsar the things which were his.

All the constitutional liberty which now exists in the world can be traced back directly to the religious patriots of 1640. Their enemies themselves being judges, the Puritans formed the bone and sinew of English patriotism. Even Hume himself, a bigoted monarchist and infidel, admits that all the great principles of English liberty, as they are now understood and asserted, were developed and maintained by the Puritans. And do I err in ascribing their consistency and comparative moderation to their religious character ? Their religion made them what they were ; it was the principal element in their character. If they had



not been religious men, they would not have been constitutional patriots; if they had not feared God, neither would they have regarded man. To the religious principles of her patriots England owes whatever is glorious in the history of the past, or bright in the promise of the future.

Under such auspices, the foundations of our American Republic were laid. Such was the school of patriotism in which the fathers of New-England were educated. The religion of the Pilgrims planted the institutions of learning and liberty on these shores. Let us not then rob that religion of its just praise ; nor ascribe to the deified spirit of liberty, and the mere intelligence of our fathers, the precious patrimony we have inherited. Nor let us vainly suppose, that this inheritance can be preserved in another spirit, or by other means, than those by which it was originally gained. The religion of the Puritans, softened indeed as it may be and ought to be in some of its more rugged features, yet still the religion of the Puritans, in all the sublimity and energy of its living spirit, neither robbed of its vitality by the empiricism of metaphysical refinement, nor reduced to a mere skeleton by the cold anatomy of a baptized skepticism,—the religion of the Puritans, as it founded and reared the fabric of our scientific and civil institutions, so can it alone preserve and perpetuate them.

To the gentlemen of this society, who have honored me by making me the organ of their sentiments on this occasion, I can make no more grateful return than to express my confidence in the soundness and patriotism of their feelings and



views, and my belief that it is their object and ambition to diffuse through the community correct and thorough views of education. May this Society and this place ever be indeed a fountain, from which streams shall issue to fertilize and gladden the State and the country. And may we all, in our several spheres and relations, as educationists, or legislators, or citizens, come up to the full conception of the relations and responsibilities, in which we are placed.

American citizens ! Freeman ! Inheritors of institutions planted by the toil, fostered by the care, and defended by the blood of the "Fathers!" Who does not glory in such a birth-right? Who is not proud of such a patrimony? Who does not wish to preserve and transmit it unimpaired to posterity? If there ever was a trust sacred, precious, inestimable, committed to men, we are the depositaries of that trust. And if we prove recreant to it, when shall there ever be such another? If the sun of American liberty shall set, when, where shall another arise? If the fair fabric of our republic shall be dissolved, and crumble like the ruins of a once glorious antiquity, who shall rear again the thrown-down fragments, and build again its desolations? If our glorious eagle shall be consumed on the funeral pyres of disunion and anarchy, where shall another arise like a phoenix from his ashes in renewed youth and immortal vigor? Alas ! where can the experiment of a free government ever be tried under better auspices? When will there ever be in the tide of times a wiser, more patriotic or more pious race, than were the founders of this republic? If then the American

republic shall sink in the common grave of those which have preceded it, the knell of human liberty will have been tolled. There can be no second New-England. If the inheritance of our fathers be once lost, it is lost forever; the last hope of the world dies; the cycle of free governments will be complete; the unending series of anarchy and succeeding despotism will commence. If the American experiment fails, the question respecting the feasibility of popular governments is forever settled; it is an experiment for the human race. Its success or failure will determine whether man may or may not be a self-governing animal, whether the withering doctrines of legitimacy, which have spread the pall of death over the Eastern continent, shall triumph, and the cherished hopes of patriots and freemen go out in eternal night, or the sun of human liberty arise to shed glory and gladness round the earth.

The decision of this question, so momentous, so vast, will turn upon the fundamental principles of education, which shall obtain. Let our counsels then, while they are animated by zeal, be directed by wisdom. Let us freely and fearlessly inquire, while we earnestly and zealously inculcate and enforce. While our feelings are ardent, let our principles be sound; and when we have done all for the intellectual, moral and religious improvement of the people, which as citizens and men we owe to our country and the world, let us send up to heaven the dying prayer of the famous Father Paul for his country, so aptly quoted by Blackstone in the close of his celebrated eulogium on the British Constitution, "ESTO PERPETUA."

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**MR. GREGG'S ADDRESS**

BEFORE THE

**NEW-HAMPSHIRE STATE LYCEUM.**

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1834













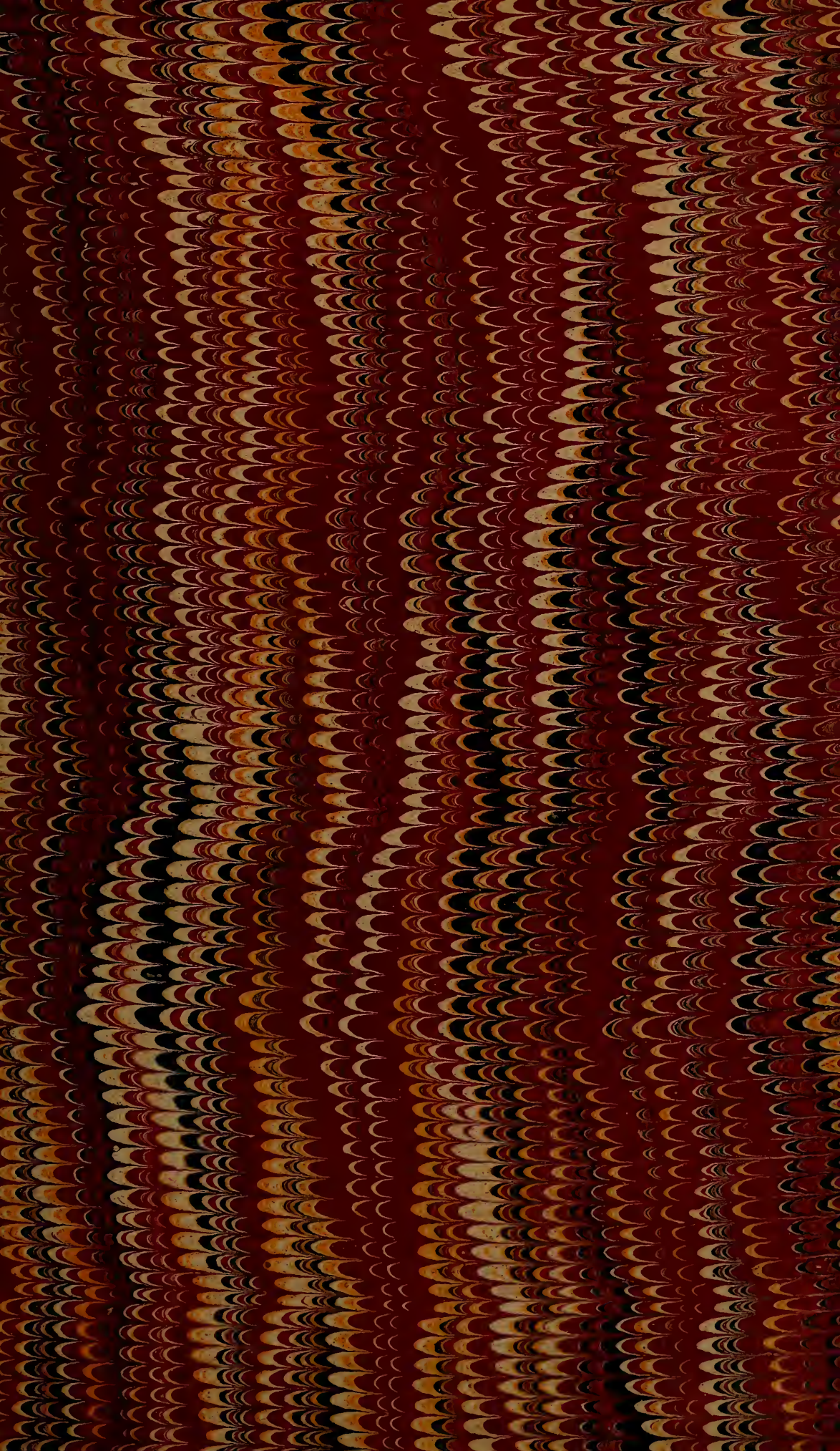














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